

The departmental budget review reconvened on Monday, April 12, 2010, at 9:08 a.m., and proceeded as follows:

Mr. Kaneshiro: Is there anyone in this chambers wanting to speak on this item today? We'll be covering the fire department, liquor department, civil defense agency, Kaua'i Humane Society, personnel department. Any written testimonies? If not, good morning. We will start with the fire department. Chief? You have the floor, Chief, good morning.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

ROBERT WESTERMAN, Chief, Fire Department: Good morning Budget Chair and Councilmembers. You have my written presentation...let me pull mine out here. I'm not going to go through and read this thing. I'm going to go through and do some picking and choosing, in the interest of brevity. Our current budget this year is what we consider as an absolute minimum. In all areas of the budget we have reduced some, and in some cases we have eliminated other area. After the seven percent pay increase and the increase in OPEB, the other post employment benefits, our budget reflects an eight percent increase over the previous year. We have reduced the operating budget by twenty-one percent, before funding the helicopter services, which then increased the operating budget by twenty-five percent. We added no other large capital equipment to the budget, and we have dollar-funded five firefighters and one senior clerk in this budget currently in front of you. However, in the May submittal, we will be coming back with only three firefighters dollar-funded. And the reason for that is we just got word from FEMA on our SAFER grant (we were holding back on hiring) and were informed by them that we had to maintain those levels of firefighters, if not, we would have to refund the entire grant amount. Currently, that stands at \$392,000 received from...

Council Chair Asing: Chief, can you hold on just for a short while. The items that you're reading there, can you have us make a copy of that so that we can follow you and it's much easier, or...

Chief Westerman: Oh, it's in the budget message...

Mr. Kaneshiro: Page 7.

Chief Westerman: It's in the budget message, I'm sorry.

Council Chair Asing: It's in page 7.

Chief Westerman: Yes, it's on page 2 of 7, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, and I...near the bottom of page 2 of 7, the last paragraph. I apologize.

Council Chair Asing: This is what you're reading from, then?

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Council Chair Asing: Okay.

Mr. Kaneshiro: And in the back, page 7 of 7, you have the...you have all the positions (inaudible).

Chief Westerman: All the positions, yes.

Council Chair Asing: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro:

...that you can refer to. Okay, continue, Chief.

Chief Westerman: Alright. As you can see... I'd like to go on to the next page then and talk about our responses. And during the calendar year of 2009, the fire department responded to 4614 calls for assistance. That's 202 calls less than 2008, and that seems to be where we've stabilized over the last two years. I won't reference all of the years, but as you can see, we're about a four percent in the last two years. We're attributing that to a couple things: like we expressed last year, we no longer respond to the...to the cruise ships for the medical calls, because they're just doing a transfer of care, and then we attribute that additional 200 to the downturn in the economy and less tourism on the island. But in the aggregate, in calendar year 2009, we responded 55 percent of the time in less than five minutes to all fire calls. Even though that's four percent faster than the previous year, it's still behind where we want to be and where we need to be to achieve our accreditation. Our response calls for medical assistance was 95 percent in less than 10 minutes, an improvement of one percent over the previous year. For our rescue calls, we responded 85 percent in less than 15 minutes, an improvement of 20 percent. And part of that has been...part of that makeup isn't that we've gotten there any faster; it's the way that we've been able to retrieve the data out of the computer system, and I'll talk about that a little bit in a little bit more detail later. We have instituted a daily staffing to a five firefighter minimum in Hanalei whenever possible to help reduce (inaudible) liability. In Hanalei, as you know, it's a large response district and with...all the way to Hā'ena to Kīlauea, and a lot of times they get back-to-back calls and we have to split the unit. So by having minimum staffing of five down there, we're able to remove the truck and send it to a medical call at least, so that we have the AED medical assistance while we wait for the ambulance to arrive. And we do this by simply adjusting the staffing islandwide and occasionally using overtime.

The new helicopter operations will also improve the response time for rescue significantly by putting us into the air faster. As the chart indicates, we're still outside of our 80 percent goal on fire responses. As we progress through the next few years in our strategic plan, we'll evaluate these numbers and use our newly acquired ARC GIS software and GPS mapping software to evaluate these options. Part of that too is the new CADS. We're getting ready to do the RFP reviews for the CAD system that the police department is buying, and a lot of that improvement in data collection, time response, time on scene, will go significantly to us being able to better say where are we getting in the right time, where are we not getting in time, and help us adjust our strategic plan.

Moving on to page 4, you can kind of see the graphics of where we stand in all of the areas as far as our response times, and the line of where we'd really like to be, and we're still responding about 65 percent of our calls to EMS. And in comparison to the last two years, our response time seems to be tracking...the average response time is slightly higher than last year. Until we get the Kaikea(sp?) station built and staffed, and the Kapa'a station relocated, we're still going to have about the same response times in that district. We still continue to lose ground with the large increase in call load and as the population spreads. Again, that's kind of been stabilized with our tourism going down and our construction industry slowing down.

Previous years, through the hard work and eloquent wordsmithing and steadfast determination of our firefighters, we have written several grants. We've been awarded over 3.8 million dollars in various grants that supported the department directly and assisted with vehicle and equipment replacement. Again, as we now are with the SAFER grant, the savings in the next year will be over \$250,000 of salaries directly funded by the grant. We now have the new SCVAs online, the driver simulator was awarded, and the MDT which has been purchased and completely installed, and we're just waiting for the CAD system to come online, that will help us with our accountability and safety for our firefighters.

As you move down near the bottom of the page, you know, it's identified in our strategic plan and to fully comply with seventeen ten, we're still short by several positions: three operations battalion chiefs, special operations battalion chief, public information officers, and education officers, a driver aide to assist the battalion chief. To improve the safety of our water safety officers operating on the jet skis, we require additional WSOs in each of the three jet skis towers to insure minimum staffing of three WSOs, although we did not put any of those in the budget this year.

Conditions of our facilities worsen and relocation of the Kapa'a station is upon us as we not necessarily start construction now, but also complete construction of the district 2, Kaikea station. The training center is still needed to provide adequate space for classroom for recruits and seasoned firefighters, and provide acreage for co-locating the fire-burn trailer/driver simulator emergency response operations course. The headquarter space is inadequate for the staff to operate together at full efficiency, but thanks to the council, we are finishing up our design on the headquarter space in Piikoi, which is doing really well, and we're just about ready to put the stamp on. This is the final design, and that will provide the much-needed training room space, and also with that, we're going to co-locate an alternate EOC location in that training room space, so in case they lose use of the EOC over in the police facility, it can come over to the Piikoi building. And plans are moving forward to include the alternate dispatch in that facility.

We'd also like to thank the administration, public works, for doing some renovations on Waimea, Hanapēpē, Kapa'a fire station with new paint, new apparatus, floor paint, new hose racks, and this will extend the life of the aging facilities. So they did a tremendous in this last year really doing some renovation work in those facilities. Safety of the firefighters and safety of the public; we had people slip on our apparatus (inaudible) floor, so it was extremely important that we got those floors repainted and got them with the grid in and so people wouldn't slip and slide. But mostly, it extends the age of those facilities as we work through the next 10 years of replacing aging buildings.

Without really getting into the budget discussion, as we move forward and stated earlier, many of our budget decisions were based on our five twenty-year plan, and our past efforts, like our vehicle replacement schedule, I'm proud to say that we have no major pieces of apparatus or light vehicles included in this budget, an indication that the apparatus replacement plan is working. As you know, those vehicles are very, very expensive, and over the last 4 of 5 years, with the help of the administration and the council, we were able to replace our entire fleet, also using some grant funding to assist in replacement of some of our vehicles, and at some very, very significant cost to us in our budget.

The fire department's 2011 budget request is \$20,513,225, and this includes the increases in the negotiated wage and associated items, plus the increase in OPEB funding, and the current proposed furlough. The budget distribution shows a significant difference in the operating budget versus salaries or other related items, basically 91 percent of our budget is salaries, leaving minimum funding for operating items. And as we continue to try and save, the impacts on services will become more and more crucial as we have less funds for things like bandages, gasoline, and toilet paper. Even with the dollar funded positions, any next steps towards further reductions could have a significant impact on services.

Now, what has the department done to help make up for those shortfalls? Everywhere that grant moneys are available, we've used them to improve our services, replace our equipment, provide training and support programs. Since 2007, we have purchased through the homeland security grant three rescue vehicles for \$462,000, communications command vehicles, radios, portable repeaters, upgrade network connectivity for voice over IP and the EOC to the tune of \$1.3 million. Cyber security upgrades for \$100,000. Homeland security grant mobile data terminals for \$280,000. Homeland security grant additional turnout gear for \$108,000. Homelands security complete change out of our SCBAs for \$375,000. CERT program \$35,000. Volunteer assistance grant for wildland

firefighting \$140,000. By the way, we just got notification from the State that we'll get an additional \$36,000 on the \$50,000 for the next year, so the last couple years there's some increased fundings have come through where they have passed that on to us. CDBG replacement of (inaudible) jaws of life for \$78,000. CDBG rescue trucks for \$250,000. Assistance to firefighter grant for the burn trailer \$250,000. Assistance to firefighter grant driver simulator \$285,000. We are also the recipients of the national fire academy grants for training, State grants for training, homeland security grants for training, for over \$150,000 in overtime and travel cost. This training was on-island, within the State. And out-of-State travel training for hazmat, first responder, bomb awareness, records management system, fire prevention, arson awareness, and investigation training, just to name a few.

Now we will continue the wave awareness and visitor education, Kaua'i explorer dot come, junior lifeguard, and CERT community emergency response program this year, however, at a reduced funding level. Funding for these programs is critical to providing our citizens the opportunity to work together with the department in supporting lifesaving education and disaster preparedness program. And again, our major apparatus replacement schedule, there is no major apparatus being replaced this year.

And then finally, on the last page you have a outline of the positions that we have that are currently open, when we intend to staff those positions, or if we intend to hire this year, and at the very bottom of the page, the four WSO positions that are funded by the State, so they're grant funded by the State. That's the only positions that we have that are grant funded. So in a nutshell, that's kind of where we are in our budget presentation, and then we're willing to take any questions that you might have.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Okay, with that, member, any questions for the chief?
Mr. Bynum.

Mr. Bynum: Good morning Chief. Thanks for the (inaudible) and, you know, setting a good example for giving us a (inaudible) written report. Thank you very much. I'm just going to go down the list of (inaudible) and try to be real quick. Dollar funded five firefighter positions and those (inaudible), so has there been an analysis of how much of savings there are in dollar funding those positions, if there's impact over time on the other side. I'm coming from the assumption that overtime hours costs more than regular firefighter hours.

Chief Westerman: Any time we don't fund a position ,yes it has an impact on overtime. It just depends on how many we don't have at any give time or in any given shift on any given day. Because we have more or less one body per station to allow for one person to be off in every station every day, so we try and manage that with 8 people off a day. So now that we will have three now instead of five, the impact will be very minimal. And again, it goes to how we will staff our fire stations on a daily basis. If we don't use any overtime and we're able to staff all the stations and staff Hanalei for five for a day and that means we might move Hanapēpē down to three for a day, we might do that to avoid the overtime cost. We try and maintain the four (inaudible) manning, if you remember, and that's the justification for our overtime and our rank-for-rank schedules is to maintain that safe level of manning for initial response. Will it have impacts? But the impacts will be minimum compared to the hiring cost at this point. Will I love to have every single position filled every single day? Absolutely.

Mr. Bynum: And just looking at the list, is there a reason that the five dollar funded are all on the west side?

Chief Westerman: No. Only because that's where the positions are right now. When we assembled this for the council, it just so happens that's where the positions are right now.

When we do have our shortfalls, we will probably have three of them on the west side, and that's because the proximity of the stations together. Where if we short-staff Hanalei, then we have to move more people to Hanalei on a daily basis, if we're already short-staffed in the Westside where the stations are closer together where we would pull our crews from, therefore the staffing is already there.

Mr. Bynum: Yeah, and I understand that that doesn't mean the west side will be short staffed...

Chief Westerman: Absolutely, absolutely.

Mr. Bynum: Because you'll make the movements as required by the daily situation yeah. Okay, thanks for answering that. Could you explain back-to-back out of district call increase in Hanalei district.

Chief Westerman: Yes, that's...you know, that's been going on for couple years and why we have chosen to increase the staffing levels on a daily basis at Hanalei out of the other crews. Because the district is so large and because they go on such a huge variety of calls, I won't say it's routinely, but more often than it has been in the past. They could be on a call. An example would be a rescue in Hanakāpī'ai. It may have the engine and the rescue truck all the way down to the far end of their district. Then if we get a fire or a medical call back in Princeville, then we have to bring the crew all the way from Kapa'a. Now Kaikea will go a long way to help in that situation where we'll be able to move up a company or a partial company to go into their district, but right now, if we were to move up Kapa'a, then we would now leave our largest district unprotected without services. So when they get that back-to-back call by having five firefighters, three on the engine and two on the rescue truck, they can break away the rescue truck to come back, or stay into their district, if they know it's going to be a long call. And back-to-back means they're out on a call, and then another call comes in. And again, as big as their district is and as big as their call load is getting. Also, we have the issue of the bridge closure, so again it was just closed the other day, and if we send the engine across or we send the truck across, if we don't have enough firefighters remaining behind, then we end up shifting firefighters all the way around the island.

Mr. Bynum: Moving on to...you mentioned a couple times the relocation of the Kapa'a station. We know about Kaikea, but I...the Kapa'a station remains yeah?

Chief Westerman: It remains right now, yes.

Mr. Bynum: So there's no specific plans for relocating that station at this time? Have we identified a site or...

Chief Westerman: We have been looking at several sites. We actually had some very good conversation right before the downturn of the economy with department of Hawaiian homelands in some areas that they were going to be developing on the Līhu'e side of the bridge, which would really set our district in half, which is what we're trying to do, but of course that development has gone on hold, so we're back...kind of back to square one looking for the best place to relocate that station, and then finding the economy to build it.

Mr. Bynum: So when you say the relocation is upon us, you mean we really need to figure it out.

Chief Westerman: We do.

Mr. Bynum: Not that we've identified a site and it's going to happen soon, right?

Chief Westerman: Right...well we have identified a couple, but it's just that, again, the economics of the department of Hawaiian homelands, which would be the best place to relocate, we would then have to pretty much be the developer for the whole piece of land and increase the cost, so...

Mr. Bynum: And then something we talked about some last year and you mentioned in where it talks about large increase in call load and population spread, I asked last year and I thought you had a pretty good answer about whether the fire department has input on land use decisions and how it impacts your services. And I just...you know, we're...we've entered a new era where planning is happening less in silos, and there's more integration—administration is contemplating perhaps applying for a grant to do a kind of integrated transportation-housing-land use planning. I hope that that comes to fruition. I know they're exploring that possibility, because we used to do these things kind of not thinking about all of the impacts of these decisions. In the last year we've had four...close to 400 new ag subdivisions, which I know are difficult for you to service. And so, you know, I'll put this in form of a question, but I know...I recognize it's also a comment, that I'm hoping that the fire department is involved in those land use discussions and in land use planning, you know, with letting us know what the impact is on services, the cost of service delivery, you know, response times, that kind of thing.

Mr. Kaneshiro: I would like to take that up as a separate agenda item, I think. You know, it might even...we could have some really long discussions on that possibility.

Mr. Furfaro: It should be noted that currently the fire department does get circulated every application to review at this point, but I think your question is much broader than that.

Chief Westerman: And that pretty much was going to be my response. We do, and you're right, and most of it is in the tube that we get it.

Mr. Kaneshiro: We'll send it in writing, probably put it on another agenda item, as we get to discuss land use items, Mr. Bynum, if you don't...

Mr. Bynum: You're right. I think that's something we need to talk about, but I hear the short answer is you are focused on those issues and providing input.

Chief Westerman: Yes sir.

Mr. Bynum: I think my last question has to do with...

Council Chair Asing: Let me try to answer that. You know, when you say focused on that, I mean you're mandated, you have to do that, because it is sent to you anyway for a response.

Chief Westerman: Yes sir.

Council Chair Asing: So you're...it's not whether you like it or not, it's a mandate.

Chief Westerman: Absolutely... And we do. As the plans come through as we do, but again, like the chair has stated, we could spend some time in discussing how maybe that is

managed and maybe other inputs or, you know, updates of the plans might help us achieve better development.

Mr. Bynum: I'd like very much to have that discussion. If it's not appropriate today, that's fine, because...

Mr. Kaneshiro: I've already mentioned that, Mr. Bynum. So go ahead with your next question.

Mr. Bynum: During the recent tsunami warning, was CERT activated?

Chief Westerman: Yes, and the north shore CERT, the Princeville CERT team, Kīlauea CERT team has been practicing as part of their routine, of all things, the tsunami evacuation, only because they know in their community they get all of the folks coming out of Hanalei for the evacuation of vehicles. So they had been working and planning that for several years, and one of the first things that PD had asked us is if we could activate CERT and make those folks available to help them park all those cars. Because essentially that's what it was—was turning couple fields into parking lots, and it would have taken several police officers, where the community could help out, and they did, they did a very good job, very, very good job.

Mr. Bynum: So am I correct in assuming that's kind of tailor made for CERT support, that kind of situation?

Chief Westerman: That's one of the things, yes, that CERTs in the community can do; absolutely.

Mr. Bynum: And I just...you know, last year one of my concerns was that the volunteer position at the fire department went away, and you made a strong commitment to CERT at the time, and so I just want to... I have to ask this question. You know, has the CERT effort maintained its level of importance and resources since the loss of that position?

Chief Westerman: Well, I feel it has. We've done several things since then. We have a firefighter that's assigned to that; he's a CERT coordinator. He also has...we got five firefighters trained as CERT instructors, and we're providing CERT training through them through the department. He continues to interact with them on a daily/weekly basis. I mean he's available to them, he has his own desk in the office, his own cell phone, and is very interactive with the community, and he's actually who we called as soon as they said they want to activate CERT, because he's the one that knows how to get a hold of everybody. So we're...I think we're keeping the same level intensity in the program.

Mr. Bynum: So the CERT training and identifying new members and moving them through is all continuing?

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Bynum: And part of the reason I ask is I used to go to CERT events couple times a year, and I haven't been invited to one.

Chief Westerman: Right, well we haven't done any quarterly ones. We've been working just in each of the communities. It wasn't getting as big a draw as we thought it was going to get, and it would get maybe 10 or 15 out of the 200 some...320 now that we have. So we've been trying to focus in each individual community what they want to do in their community.

Mr. Bynum: Okay. So short version is you continue to have a commitment to the CERT program.

Chief Westerman: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Bynum: And it's adequately resourced. Thank you very much.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Thank you. Mr. Furfaro, go ahead.

Mr. Furfaro: Yes, thank you. First of all, Chief, thank you for the fine job your department does in our community. I want to say I'm extremely pleased with all of the things you have accomplished over the last few years. I will start by asking, do you know how far along they are exactly with the Piikoi design concept for you to move back over, and do we anticipate when that might actually happen so we might have a chance to save some lease rent?

Chief Westerman: Well first of all, thank you for the kind words, and yes, we got some very fine men and women doing great jobs in the fire department. Actually, I just...the engineer and myself are pulling our hair out trying to hit the design deadlines and get those done, and I think the last discussion over the door in my office is done, and so I think we're done with the design. I did ask Ken the other day if he still felt we were going to make the timeline for finish of construction, and he feels very confident that we will make that. So the design is done. There are some issues that will come up as we go through. Again, we tried to incorporate the EOC and the alternate dispatch, and that alternate dispatch is a bigger gorilla than we thought the monkey might be. So we're going to press on with our design that we have now. We're providing them the space, and then they're going to work separately to make that happen. So what I did was I gave up space in the building for them to house it, and now they'll be able to go on with their separate design.

Mr. Furfaro: And that was your decision?

Chief Westerman: Yes, because otherwise we're going to hold up the design at this point. They're ready. They're just, you know, they got to figure out how big their gorilla is going to be and maybe how small it's going to be for the space that's available.

Mr. Furfaro: Over the years we have done staffing increases for the fire department that ultimately for the safety of the crews, and also for the overall homeowner insurance rating, we got to a point that we actually improved our rating. In this budget, are you satisfied that there will not be any insurance revisions as it relates to homeowners qualifying for the best possible rates?

Chief Westerman: Good question. I feel that if the ISO came back this year and did their evaluation of the island of Kaua'i as far as fire services are, this budget will maintain the current service ratings that we have with ISO.

Mr. Furfaro: And for your personnel, are we at a staffing level that for the firemen themselves, we are meeting safety requirements?

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Council Chair Asing: Councilmember Furfaro, Chair, can we handle this like if there is a same question, a follow-up question, so that we can clear it?

Mr. Furfaro: Understood.

Council Chair Asing: I wanted to follow-up on the question that was asked by Councilmember Furfaro regarding the time element for moving into the new area. So I did not get a response, an answer to that, on when.

Chief Westerman: Oh, we're about 14 months from moving in, that's what Ken is telling me, and that should be...

Council Chair Asing: So that target date of 14 months is...

Chief Westerman: Should be July of next year.

Council Chair Asing: ...in fact accurate and it is 14 months from when?

Chief Westerman: Today.

Council Chair Asing: From today?

Chief Westerman: From this timeline, yes. That's like July of next year.

Council Chair Asing: Okay, that's what I was looking for. I was looking for the time when exactly. So 14 months.

Chief Westerman: Well, I don't have an exact date, and you know, we can get back to you with that when we finally get the contract for the actual renovation to be done. But like I said, the conversation I had with the engineer the other day, he feels that the amount of work that's got to be done, he can get a contractor to complete it within the timeline that you have set for us.

Council Chair Asing: Okay 14 months, good. Thank you.

Mr. Furfaro: As you said, that is the original plan.

Chief Westerman: Yes, that is the original plan.

Mr. Furfaro: And then I didn't have anymore questions regarding firefighter staffing and its impact on our homeowner insurance rating. Did anybody have...

Mr. Kaneshiro: Anyone had questions about that, the impact? I think the Chief answered it, so...

Mr. Furfaro: Also then on your equipment, especially your big items, during the time that I've been on the council, we have responded to your request about new equipment, and you know, the replacement of the fleet and so forth. And I heard you say that we're on target. Did I hear you right that all of our primary equipment is fairly new now?

Chief Westerman: Yes sir.

Mr. Furfaro: And do we have the best of the older equipment held in redundancy? We have one or two engines in backup?

Chief Westerman: Yes sir. We have three, and we are trying to staff...not staff one, trying to equip one so it's an immediate full response, and then the other two are standby.

Mr. Furfaro: Okay. When Mr. Bynum asked this question, I almost chimed in, but I just want...regarding the eastside plans, I understood that when department of Hawaiian homes looks at developing those areas south of Wailua river on the Līhu'e side, we would be able to work with them on a additional station at the appropriate time. But I was always under the impression that the Kapa'a station would remain active, but we would look at something up in Wailua homesteads?

Chief Westerman: Well, we did some additional reviews of going up Wailua homesteads. The problems associated with going up Wailua Homesteads is the ability to respond to the rest of the district in a reasonable amount of time. Once you pull it off the main street, so to speak, you get off of main street and you put it up in the community, you pretty much then only serves that community, because the time...the time response times now become extended by coming down the hill. Everything beyond, like the Kintaro's area and going towards Wailua and going into...towards Līhu'e now becomes extended because we've actually moved Kaikea going more north.

Mr. Furfaro: But I always understood in the scenario that Wailua got a station, Wailua homestead. The fact of the matter would be that the Kapa'a oceanside would be restored and renovated until such time that we're able to do something with Hawaiian Homes. Is that not the case?

Chief Westerman: Well, that can be the case, absolutely. And we did some work on it just months ago...

Mr. Furfaro: Yeah, but that's basic...

Chief Westerman: But that's basic (unaudible)...

Mr. Furfaro: ...esthetics, repair, so forth.

Chief Westerman: Yeah, absolutely.

Mr. Furfaro: I'm talking about just some upgrades to the station. But I wanted to make sure I clarified that. I'm only talking about the Wailua station, if we are able to keep...is that fire unit two, in Kapa'a.

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Furfaro: That is an option?

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Furfaro: Okay. Future discussions, I guess. You said salaries were 91 percent of your budget.

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Furfaro: I assume you meant salaries and benefits.

Chief Westerman: Absolutely, I apologize. Yes, it's salaries and all other related items that are related to salaries.

Mr. Furfaro: Okay, because with the help of Mr. Rezentes, this council has stayed focused on making sure that all of our potential liabilities dealing with benefits have been

funded. On your five firefighters that you have dollar funded, and I'll send this over via Jade with a question, I want to match up some of these numbers for the positions that you have, and what you have identified as Hanapēpē station, Kalāheo, and Waimea, because in the 09-10 budget, the council identified \$184,000 of salaries for those five positions, and now we're...I'm assuming those are the positions that were identified as being dollar funded? And I'd just like to get some verifications on the position numbers as it relates to your narrative. So I'll send that over as a question, if I can?

Mr. Kaneshiro: Okay.

Mr. Furfaro: Have you made any comparison on where we're at with the previous year's overtime versus what you're anticipating for overtime in this new budget? If you haven't, I'm going to ask that that be done as well. I'd like to see the value of those five dollar funded positions as their ability to offset any cost in overtime. And clearly, the difference on overtime is not the actual funding of the first straight time hours, it's only the half time that's the premium, and so we can only compare it, you know, to the savings against the premium portion (inaudible).

Chief Westerman: And you bring up a very good point. If you're only talking about the half time, the half time takes twice as many hours a full time salary to make up for that.

Mr. Furfaro: So I would like to see just a little comparison year to year.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Anyone else has any questions on those dollar funded positions? We can have some discussion on that right now. Okay, continue. Any other questions?

Mr. Furfaro: No, actually I've gone through the line by line items in the chief's budget, and you know, pretty much that's all I had, and I'll send over those questions on the position numbers.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Okay. I have a question for the chief. So in regards to some of these positions, so through the recruitment process, we were able to fill vacant positions if the positions become available?

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Through the recruitment process you'll be able to find qualified people to fill some positions?

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Kaneshiro: I needed to ask that question because there's some departments that come in and ask for dollar funded positions, and at the same time, some, I'm just saying as an example, that they have problems trying to find personnel to fill those positions.

Chief Westerman: We have a current list of still remaining 40 people that have qualified in the last 6 months...actually the...the 8 we have came off that list.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Alright. Thank you. Any other questions for the chief?

Mr. Furfaro: I have one more question for him.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Mr. Furfaro.

Mr. Furfaro: Thank you. Chief, as it relates to water safety, can I assume that the position that you've taken in your budget is those positions that we currently have, not new positions, but they are...they should be considered as necessary positions?

Chief Westerman: Absolutely.

Mr. Furfaro: Okay, even when it comes to daily coverage and so forth?

Chief Westerman: Yes sir.

Mr. Furfaro: That is how I interpreted your presentation, and you're confirming that for me now.

Chief Westerman: It takes everybody we've got in ocean safety in order to provide the service that we're providing now today.

Mr. Furfaro: Okay, and you know, I was only talking about current positions.

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Mr. Furfaro: Thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Mr. Asing go ahead.

Council Chair Asing: I have a question on page 4, the middle of the page, you mentioned 3.8 million in various grants that you've been awarded I guess for the year, and my question is, it appears by what you have written there, like you have people in the department that are writing grants, am I correct?

Chief Westerman: Yes sir.

Council Chair Asing: How many people do you have writing grants?

Chief Westerman: Five, maybe six.

Council Chair Asing: What are they doing besides that, I mean...

Chief Westerman: Being firefighters. They...we have some very dedicated firefighters that help us as we look...every grant opportunity comes up, to do research on the grants, and then write the product. The SAFER grant is a good example of that. Kilipaki Vaughn, he did a very good job on that one. We have Captain Lake, he's done tremendous jobs on the assistance to firefighter grants...

Council Chair Asing: Okay, why don't we do this. Thank you. Maybe I'll send the question over and you can give me the...give us the information on the grants that were written and by who. The reason I ask that question is I believe we have in the budget, we have had in the budget for years, one grants person, and that grants person was originally to be housed in the police department, and they moved it to Civil Defense, and I think that's Elton. And supposedly, he was supposed to be the grant writer for Civil Defense, Fire, and Police. So what I'd like to find out is how many grants has he written for the fire department versus how many have you done by yourselves as a department.

Chief Westerman: And in that vain, I'll let you know that Elton Ushio is a big part of our grants program; he absolutely is.

Council Chair Asing: Yes...well, should be; that's why we funded that position for that purpose.

Chief Westerman: But if you just look at what we're doing, he couldn't handle just us. He's going to need help somehow, and so that's how we do it.

Council Chair Asing: Good, thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Good. We'll follow-up with a question from the Chair on that.
Mr. Bynum you had a question for the chief?

Mr. Bynum: Yeah, I missed it... and we're going to have a separate session, I understand, to talk about furloughs, but I want to say that I was very surprised and am concerned that water safety officers are scheduled for furlough in your budget. I was just very surprised, and I'll follow-up with those questions later, but I have real concerns about that, just because they're HGEA. I see that as kind of an anomaly. In my thinking, and this is the question, in my thinking, water safety officers are an integral part of the department, like firefighters. And why they're in HGEA, you know, I don't know all the answers to that, but I just thought we were going in to this being clear that public safety officers were not going to be subject to furloughs. So we can follow-up on the 20th.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Yeah, we'll have the discussion on the 20th. We're going to be discussing about the furloughs and we'll come up with a notice, an agenda item on that. Any other questions for the chief? Lani.

Ms. Kawahara: Thank you. Good morning Chief. Thank you for all your department does. I had a quick question. I'm looking at the annual report from last year, and I was curious about the ocean safety bureau that we're just discussing. Is the water safety officer have 29? Is that something that's accurate? ...of authorized personnel?

Chief Westerman: I don't have the number off the top of my head, I apologize.

Ms. Kawahara: But it's quite...

Chief Westerman: But all of our ocean safety water safety officer positions are full, yes.

Ms. Kawahara: Okay.

Chief Westerman: We have 45 current positions in ocean safety.

Ms. Kawahara: Okay. If I could...because you have a...if I could just get a listing of how they break out into your different bureaus, operations I guess, training and research bureau, fire prevention bureau, and ocean safety bureau. If I could get a breakout to see how that looks, because in our budget yeah, it's just a full list of all positions and not broken up by bureau.

Chief Westerman: Oh, okay. We can break out the whole department by bureau and provide that to you. Yes.

Ms. Kawahara: Thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Any other questions for the Chief? At this time I wanted to bring Mr. Rezentes up, if you don't mind, Chief. And if we have more questions after Mr. Rezentes, we'll call you back up. But you can sit, you're welcome to be right there next to Mr. Rezentes. Okay Mr. Rezentes, you have the floor.

WALLY REZENTES JR., Director of Finance: Wally Rezentes, Director of Finance, for the record. I'm not sure if I heard the question or the response correctly with regard to the Kaikea fire station and the Kapa'a fire station. I just wanted to clarify that the plan was, with respect to Kapa'a, was to look at long term options of locating it on Hawaiian Home property, the future development of Wailua, as Councilmember Furfaro stated. And that the plan was to do that, maintain Kaikea, relocated Kapa'a, and it was not to locate a station up in the Wailua homesteads area. I believe the fire department some modeling of response times from the Wailua homesteads area and it made a lot more sense to locate it on the highway frontage location. So I just wanted to make that clarification, if I heard myself...if I heard incorrectly.

Mr. Furfaro: I think...if I may respond?

Mr. Kaneshiro: Go ahead, absolutely.

Mr. Furfaro: I think a lot of it was based on the fact that department of Hawaiian Homes would need to be a partner if we got there, but in the meantime, obviously I would think, and even at the fire commission level, there would be some discussions, because department of Hawaiian Homes now also knows for them to go forward, they have to deal with partners. And it seems that if they're deferred 6, 8, 10 years, we're obviously going to have to do something to upgrade Kapa'a, you know. And I just wanted to voice my concerns, and I think at one time, or at least over the 7 years I've been on the council, there was this consideration for Wailua houselots...I'm sorry, Wailua homesteads, but at that time the modeling had not been done that referenced, you know, is there going to be any call savings times and so forth. But I would hope in the near future this becomes a discussion on the agenda of the fire commission. Thank you Mr. Rezentes.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Mr. Bynum, you had a question for Mr. Rezentes? Go ahead.

Mr. Bynum: Just a follow-up on that to make sure that the community and I'm clear. The Kapa'a...we have the new Kaikea station coming in. The Kapa'a station right now continues to operate and will continue to operate in the foreseeable future, and we're looking at some...potentially sometime mauka of the Aloha Beach Resort area, right, in that land. Is that correct? But in the meantime, Kapa'a will continue to operate.

Mr. Rezentes: Yes.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Okay, any other questions for Mr. Rezentes? Mr. Chair.

Council Chair Asing: Wally, you know, I'm not sure whether I'm correct or not, but I believe that I am. One of the primary reasons for moving to Kaikea was because the Kapa'a fire station was in a tsunami inundated area and that there were federal funds involved, and with the move, the reason for the move, was that as a primary reason. And once the move took place, the idea was you should be taking the so called tsunami zoned area fire department out of the picture. I believe it was tied to federal funds. There was reasons that were used. And if we start to take our reasoning, somebody takes our reasoning apart, you said because of this you're going to move here, you make the move and you continue to operate there, I believe we may be putting ourselves into jeopardy. So I want you to follow-up, because as I recall, that was the primary reason for that move.

Mr. Rezentes: If we are able to move to the Hawaiian Homeland site or another site that's out of the tsunami inundation flood zone, our intention would be to close down Kapa'a...the current Kapa'a station.

Council Chair Asing: Yeah, Wally, while I understand that and you may be correct, all I'm saying is that I believe that the move to Kaikea was because it was tsunami inundated, there was federal funds involved, and once you did the move, you were supposed to take down the Kapa'a station. Anyway, food for thought. Think about it, go do the research, and I think you need to look at it carefully, because I believe that was the reasoning that was used. Thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Any other questions for Mr. Rezentes? If not, any questions for the chief?

Ms. Kawahara: Yeah, just one more.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Go ahead Councilmember Kawahara.

Ms. Kawahara: Thank you budget chair. The quick question I had was the not to exceed dates for the contracts for the State and Federal grants come up on June 30, 2010. If you could just help me, does it...do you get another grant and loan automatically, or does the county pick it up?

Chief Westerman: Well, it depends on the State budget. It's a grant with the State budget to provide those water safety officers. As far as we know, it's currently in the State budget, and we will renew our current grant contract with them to extend them at some time once they pass their budget. But that's the current end date right now.

Ms. Kawahara: So right now they are in the budget and you're keeping track to make sure if we need to call them to say...if they yank it out, right?

Chief Westerman: Yes. We're just waiting on the State to pass their budget, because it will be whatever the bottom line budget is. If they take it out of the budget, then we'll have the issue of...they're not funded with general funds in our budget; they are funded with State grant funds in our budget.

Ms. Kawahara: So technically, if something...if they do bad things at the State, make bad decisions on that, then we would have to...you would come back or we would need to make sure it gets in the budget for the general.

Chief Westerman: Yes.

Ms. Kawahara: Okay. And because he brought it up, Councilmember Bynum, about the water safety officers and the furloughs, I'm concerned about that also. So if you could give me a percentage breakdown of the salaries for the fire suppression and ocean safety as it percentage of the whole...all of your total salaries, what it could be. Because obviously I see here that it's a substantial and...yeah, it's a substantial bureau, and to consider it not necessary or having to be staffed all the time, I wanted to see how much money we're putting into it to show how much commitment there is to that particular bureau.

Chief Westerman: We can do that.

Ms. Kawahara: Okay, because it's very important that I think we recognize that it's a substantial and important aspect of your services. Thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Okay, any other committee members have questions for the chief? If not, seeing none, Chief, thank you very much for being here, along with your staff. Appreciate that and your report.

Chief Westerman: It's our officer training program, is why they're here. Okay thank you.

Mr. Kaneshiro: Thank you very much. At this time, if we have liquor control here, so we're... Are you fully staffed? Are you going to make the presentation later on, Mr. Honma, just say yes or no. If not, I'm...just to determine how long we're going to take a recess. We're going to take a 5-minute recess at this time and then we'll continue.

The Fire Department budget review concluded at 10:03 a.m., and there being no objections, the meeting was in recess.